

Michael Bruce, "Ode: To a Fountain"

Description

MICHAEL BRUCE

• Ode: To a Fountain •

O Fountain of the wood! whose glassy wave
Slow-welling from the rock of years,
Holds to heav'n a mirrour blue,
And bright as ANNA'S eye,

With whom I've sported on the margin green: Â 5
My hand with leaves, with lilies white,
Gaily deck'd her golden hair,
Young NAIAD of the vale.

Fount of my native wood! thy murmurs greet
My ear, like poets heav'nly strain: Â 10
Fancy pictures in a dream
The golden days of youth.

O state of innocence! O paradise!
In Hope's gay garden, Fancy views
Golden blossoms, golden fruits, Â 15
And EDEN ever green.

Where now, ye dear companions of my youth!
Ye brothers of my bosom! where
Do ye tread the walks of life,
Wide scatter'd o'er the world? Â 20
Â Â Â Â Â 20

Thus winged larks forsake their native nest,
The merry minstrels of the morn;
New to heav'n they mount away,
And meet again no more.

All things decay; the forest like the leaf; 25
 Great kingdoms fall; the peopled globe,
 Planet-struck, shall pass away;
 Heav'ns with their hosts expire:

But Hope's fair visions, and the beams of Joy,
 Shall cheer my bosom: I will sing 30
 Nature's beauty, Nature's birth,
 And heroes on the lyre.

Ye NAIADS! blue-eyed sisters of the wood!
 Who by old oak, or storied stream,
 Nightly tread your mystic maze, 35
 And charm the wandring Moon,

Beheld by poet's eye; inspire my dreams
 With visions, like the landscapes fair
 Of heav'n's bliss, to dying faints
 By guardian angels drawn. 40

Fount of the forest! in thy poet's lays
 Thy waves shall flow: this wreath of flow'rs,
 Gather'd by my ANNA's hand,
 I ask to bind my brow.

NOTES:

7 Gaily – Airily; cheerfully (Johnson).

8 NAIAD – A nymph of fresh water, thought to inhabit a river, spring, etc. (QED).

9 Fount – Fountain, a well; a spring (Johnson).

11 Fancy Poetic imagination.

21 larks – A small singing bird (Johnson).

27 Planet-struck – Blasted (Johnson).

32 lyre – A harp; a musical instrument to which poetry is, by poetical writers, supposed to be sung (Johnson).

41 poet's lays – A lay may be a song, a melody, a simple narrative poem, or a ballad (Britannica).

SOURCE: *Poems on Several Occasions* (Edinburgh, 1770), pp. 45-47. [Google Books]

Edited by Yaneli Lopez